

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

US/MC/26

Approved in S  
8/18/61

DATE: August 10, 1961  
TIME: 10:00 a.m.  
PLACE: The Chancellor's Villa  
Cadernabia, Italy

Participants:

United States

The Secretary of State  
Ambassador Dowling  
Mr. Brown

Germany

Chancellor Adenauer  
Dr. Von Brandt  
Mr. Weber (interpreter)

Subject: Review of Paris Ministerial Consultations

Copies to:

S/S	L	BA	Ambassy, Moscow
G	EUR	IO	US Mission Berlin
S/P	GER	Ambassy, Paris	USOV
INR/C	WE	Ambassy, London	White House
S/B	SOV	Ambassy, Bonn	

The Secretary opened the discussion by stating that the Foreign Ministers meeting had been a good one. He had followed it by talking to the North Atlantic Council and had been surprised there by the unity of the Council. He had thought we would see some differences of views. The nine national representatives who spoke had all affirmed unity and seriousness of purpose. It was heartening and encouraging and is hopeful for NATO itself. Whether this will continue as we move into intense crises cannot be said; as of today there is unity of purpose.

The Secretary noted that the Chancellor would be seeing Prime Minister Fanfani later in the day. He said he had discussed the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow in Rome. What Khrushchev said to Fanfani is what he said to the President and publicly since early June. For our part we have not seen any plausible opening for profitable negotiation in what he has said. He repeatedly states he wants negotiations but on his own proposals rather than Berlin and Germany as a whole.

The Secretary said he wanted to mention a point on the President's mind on which he would appreciate the Chancellor's advice. The President feels most gravely his responsibility for the use of nuclear weapons. He has committed himself and the United States to full solidarity with Western Europe in the Berlin crisis. He is now calling on many Americans to disturb their civilian life by taking up military service. Draft calls have tripled and reserves are being called up. We are also calling on our allies to take similar steps to increase forces and make the necessary sacrifices. The President is concerned

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lest the Western alliances think of the problem only in military terms. There is not only the question of public opinion but also of leadership in each country. If we must come to the decision to use military forces it must be clear to all that every reasonable effort was made to find peaceful solutions and that war was forced on us by the other side. It is also important that any negotiation which occurs be under conditions wherein we have some control over the subjects to be discussed and not occur at a late stage of the crisis where we would talk only about subjects Khrushchev wants. Therefore, the President is considering whether the West should take initiative to bring about negotiations this fall. Naturally the Western position must be fully prepared in advance. It is not only the problem of having negotiations in this period but also of the timing of the public announcement of the possibility of negotiations. If the problem were only to be considered from the point of view of the United States, we would think that the possibility of negotiations should become publicly known not later than the first week of September. We know that there will be growing restlessness in the United States and in the Alliance as to when diplomacy will play its role. Additionally, if it were known that negotiations on the Foreign Ministers level were to take place there would be less prospect of someone like Nehru bringing Berlin into the UN in mid-September.

The Secretary then said that there is one serious development which affects the handling of the Berlin question. This is the Bizerte issue. The Tunisian Government request for a special meeting of the General Assembly is catastrophic for the Western position on Berlin. We have done everything possible in Tunisia and in France to get the two parties to talk. We have failed thus far. In the UN, the Communist Bloc, the Afro-Asians and some of the Latin Americans will be solidly against France and the West as well. This provides the worst possible background for a UN discussion of Berlin. If, however, negotiations are in prospect the UN might prefer to give the parties involved an opportunity to negotiate before opening debate in the UN. These are some of the factors, he continued, concerning timing. Usually timing is determined by subjects and prospects, but it does have its own importance. The Secretary expressed his desire to have the Chancellor's views on timing.

The Secretary said he had discussed the question with General de Gaulle. He had found no sympathy on the question of making the timing of negotiations public. General de Gaulle believes we are in Berlin and that if the Soviets disturb us we will shoot. This is not an adequate position in the sixties when we are considering a nuclear war. We see this even though there are vital interests in Berlin for which the United States will fight.

The Chancellor said he wanted to talk to the Secretary as frankly and as freely as he had done with Secretary Dulles. The Secretary said he considered this a high compliment.

The Chancellor said there are two factors we must remember in dealing with Khrushchev. First, he is a Russian; and second, he is a dictator. With a dictator, accounts are not reality but what he believes. A dictator gets reports from his ambassadors which do not reflect the full truth. He cannot understand our mentality or the fact that unity can be established from varying views.

The Chancellor then gave the example of General Von Kluge as a sensible, intelligent person whose own thinking was changed by serving under a dictator. Von Kluge had thought that Germany would never fight the United States but would make an arrangement with her. The Chancellor then referred to the President's speech, which he called impressive. He praised US efforts which have followed and then said these were counteracted somewhat by what has been said by Senator Mansfield, Senator Fulbright, General MacArthur, by the UK press and by the exploits of the Soviet astronaut. He said we may have learned from Prime Minister Fanfani that Khrushchev uses the statements of Senators Fulbright, Mansfield and Humphrey as representatives of American thinking.

The Chancellor referred to a recent conversation between Senator Fulbright and a Mr. Springer, head of one of West Germany's largest publishing firms. Senator Fulbright had told Mr. Springer as early as February he would favor withdrawal of US forces from Europe. The Chancellor said that Khrushchev must have known about this statement within a week.

The Secretary said that Senator Fulbright is, as the Chancellor knows, running for election in an area somewhat isolationist. He does not, however, represent foreign policy. The Chancellor knows this but Khrushchev may not and this is of course the point the Chancellor has been trying to make.

The Chancellor said that Khrushchev is a Russian nationalist first and a Communist second. In 1955 Khrushchev had told the Chancellor that capitalism was doomed. He had said that the Soviets could handle other countries as they liked with the exception of the US and China. He had given at that time to the Chancellor the impression that he would be happy to have no opponents in the West ten or twelve years later in order to be ready for the East. A few years later he heard from Mikoyan relations between China and the Soviets were fine and that the Soviets troubles were not in the West but in the East. When asked if this would be still true in ten or twelve years, Mikoyan had not replied.

Adenauer thought Khrushchev wants to be the economic hero of the Soviet Union as Lenin was its founder and Stalin its war leader. The Soviet's economy produces some excellent things but the system is bad. This is certainly evident when you contrast the two parts of Germany. He has organized a twenty year plan and in a sense can escape responsibility as he may not be around when the twenty years are over. His steppe program has failed. Given his economic interest we should stress the value of economic countermeasures. Military preparedness is important but Khrushchev is afraid of an economic blockade and would take the threat of it seriously. Advantages of economic measures are that the effects are felt at once and that you can stop the measures you have adopted any time you want to. The Soviet bloc trade with the Federal Republic is considerable. Nevertheless, the Chancellor said, he would have no trouble brushing away German industrialist opposition and the Federal Republic would join in economic measures one hundred percent. To sum up, Khrushchev believes he is strong in the military and nuclear field but weaker in the economic one. He wants to develop his economy and knows the West can take countermeasures which can affect his plans adversely. As far as negotiations are concerned they can have the stage set by mentioning the possibility of economic countermeasures. We should be ready to say we are negotiating. The party organizations in Germany have asked him to speak on TV concerning international relations and the increase in the refugee flow. He thought he would also mention the possibility of negotiations and timing.

He approved the Secretary's suggestion on the latter. He thought that the negotiations themselves should take place before the Party Congress. If

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he would discuss this on TV, he would only make general references and not give details. Mention of the possibility of economic measures would have a calming effect although some industrialists in Germany would object.

The Chancellor then turned to de Gaulle, stating his position is difficult. He had been brought back to power by the Army in 1958 to save Algeria for France. He knows he has to give up Algeria. He has no party backing and his standing with the Army has decreased. The Army is the only basis of power for de Gaulle and the question he must always ask himself is "what can I do to get on better terms with the Army?" De Gaulle's experiences with the US have been bad and he has a grudge against the US. When Algeria came up in 1959, friends of de Gaulle asked him to use his influence to prevent a censure of France. He had talked with President Eisenhower of the necessity of supporting France and he had agreed. Later the US abstained in the UN vote. Even back in 1940 Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt had treated de Gaulle badly and he has never forgotten.

The Secretary said we understand de Gaulle's problem. He emphasized the fact that our position in the UN on the Berlin problem is greatly weakened by the Bizerte crisis.

Chancellor Adenauer said that he agreed. He then noted that Pigaro had predicted a revolution in France for the 15th of August. He thought that we should wait until after that date before any approaches were made to de Gaulle on Bizerte. The Secretary said our position is well known. We do not want to have a General Assembly session on Bizerte. In the General Assembly we will say that we would like direct negotiation to take place and not UN actions.

The Chancellor said it was a wise course of action. We don't want to cause lasting damage in our relations with France. He said he appreciated the fact the United States had taken into consideration the question of German elections in studying timing. He has however no objection to mentioning the possibility of negotiation or a date before the German elections took place. He then referred in a rather annoyed way to the advice that the three Commandants had given to Amrohn not to leave Berlin while Brandt was out campaigning.

Mr. Von Brentano said he was going to Berlin tomorrow to see Amrohn.

The Chancellor said he wanted to sum things up. He favors negotiation. The suggested timing is right. The prospect of negotiation should be brought to the attention of the public and should be mentioned in the reply to the notes. We should study and prepare economic countermeasures and inform public opinion. Khrushchev must be made aware that such preparations are underway.

The Secretary said that any negotiations will be very difficult. Since 1945 the margins of compromise have been exhausted. There is little meat on the bone. Khrushchev has his prestige involved and it would be difficult to save his face.

The Chancellor agreed the situation is critical. If we take military measures only, he won't take the West seriously. But he does know the West can take economic measures without harm to itself, which he cannot reciprocate. It might be best not to mention economic measures in the note but through the press.

The Chancellor said he thought in the negotiations there might be a little meat still left on the bone. He then suggested we make another point, perhaps not in the note but in public statements. This related to the military advance of the US Army into Saxony, Thuringia and Mecklenburg during the war. The Soviets could be reminded that these territories had been exchanged for rights in Berlin.

The Secretary said he wanted to refer to the Chancellor's statements on Khrushchev as a Russian nationalist and try an idea on him which we had been thinking about. We might say to Khrushchev that the mess he had made in Eastern Germany is bad. He has had a gangster in charge who has created this. He puts pressure on the Soviets and poses danger for us. Perhaps this can be reduced by having a decent regime in East Germany. Then we could forget about it and the Berlin problem and concentrate on building up Russia. The future could worry about the line between the two Germanies. This would not be giving away anything in Berlin but changing the emphasis. h

The Chancellor said that the ideas were worth studying. We of course couldn't say we would give them aid to build up their economy as they are too proud of what they are today. The Secretary replied that the help he meant was trade not aid.

The Chancellor said we would get the serious press to consider Western military advance in World War II and its relation to Berlin. This could have a serious effect in the Soviet zone. We could say that the Governments had not raised this because of the unrest it might cause, but, if pressures continue, the Governments might bring it up.

Mr. Von Brentano said that it also rejects the idea that we obtained our Berlin rights only as a conquest.

The Secretary said it might disturb West Berliners unless some idea of exchange population was possible.

Mr. Von Brentano said that the West Berliners should understand that this was a tactical approach.

The Secretary said that he had in fact mentioned Saxony and Thuringia before he had left Washington. He has also emphasized to the press that the Federal Republic had not started to arm until the Eastern zone had.

The Chancellor said, if we had rearmed Germany right after World War I and let it fight, the Russian situation might be different today. He recalled the fact that the German Government had financed the Russian revolution to the extent of 30 million gold marks.

The Secretary said that his greatest ambition is to pass the Berlin question on to his successor. He then wondered what we would do about de Gaulle in his present situation.

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Adenauer said we should do nothing until after the 15th of August. We should furthermore not press him on the integration of his forces in NATO.

The Secretary said that the UK and France are now in full accord that the Federal Republic must be a full partner in the consideration of Berlin and German questions.

The Chancellor said he appreciated this and that he received such assurances from Vice President Johnson in Texas which he had kept confidential. The Secretary said that he wanted the Chancellor to know that the President regards highly/close association with the Federal Republic. We must both work closely together. He would value any ideas which the Chancellor may wish to send us. In turn we will keep the Federal Republic informed.

The Chancellor expressed his appreciation and said that the Federal Republic wants sincere and honest cooperation and can be relied on to help the US strengthen its leadership in the West. What the Federal Republic is today, it owes to the US.

The Secretary replied that if we had not undertaken the task of aiding Western Germany to re-establish itself, we would not have it acting in our national interest. It would be a chill world for US democracy without our friends in Western Europe. He thought that the US post-war commitment to the purposes of the UN Charter and not to total exploitation of its power had been historically important.

The Chancellor referred to his approaching meeting with Fanfani. He will tell him that the two had discussed the results of the Foreign Ministers' conference.

The Secretary said he had talked at great length with Prime Minister Fanfani who has informed us of his visit to Moscow about which he will also tell the Chancellor. From Fanfani's talk in Moscow we can expect Khrushchev to say to various nations that the Soviet Union and the United States will be hurt but will survive a nuclear war which will demolish Western Europe. He is trying to drive a wedge between us and the countries of Western Europe.

The Chancellor replied Khrushchev has made this point to the Germans on several occasions.